

PROBLEM SOLVING

We all experience problems from time to time and it's easy to feel stressed about them. If your problems seem overwhelming, you may start to feel anxious or depressed. However, the right approach can help you find solutions to problems of any size.

PROBLEM SOLVING IN FIVE STEPS

You simply can't avoid all problems. But what you can do is be ready to deal with them by developing good problem-solving skills. Here are five steps to help:

1. Choose the problem.
2. Understand the problem.
3. Come up with different solutions.
4. Compare the solutions.
5. Find the best solution and put it into action.

GETTING STARTED

1. Choose the problem:

Start by choosing a small problem. This makes it easier to learn how to use this technique. After you have successfully solved a few small problems, you can begin to tackle the bigger ones.

Once you've selected a problem, describe it in detail (below) - try to get as specific as you can. This can help you understand the problem when you write it out clearly.

- Have you had this problem before? How did you handle it?
- Is there anything more you need to find out about this problem - any information you don't have?
- Do you have any other ideas about this problem?
- Are there people who can help support you in solving this problem (friends, family, teachers, health professionals, etc.)?

Describe your problem below. Use an extra piece of paper if needed.

3. Come up with different solutions:

Think of three different ways you can solve the problem. Don't try to decide which way is best, just think of three different things that you could do that might help solve this problem. Write them below in the column "possible solutions".

4. Compare the solutions:

Once you've written down three possible solutions, start to think about the positive and negative things about each solution. Getting input from a close friend or family member can be very helpful.

POSSIBLE SOLUTION	GOOD POINTS	BAD POINTS

5. Find the best solution and put it into action:

Look over your list of positive and negative things about each solution and decide which one works best for you. You will then need to make a plan to put this solution into action. For this you will need to have good goal-setting skills. Learn more about goal setting at foundry.bc.ca.

IT CAN BE DIFFICULT TO "STEP BACK" AND LOOK AT OUR PROBLEMS OBJECTIVELY. IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO PROBLEM-SOLVE WITH A CLOSE FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER, AS THEY MAY HAVE SOME GOOD IDEAS TO OFFER.